

## **Fredericksburg Arts Commission Minutes**

**December 2, 2010**

The meeting was called to order at 7 p.m. by Vice President, Roy Jarnecke. Absent were Kevin Bartram and Patrick A'hearn. Guests present were Steven and Stewart Wegner, owners of the Wegner Metal Arts, Inc. Foundry at 520 Wolfe Street and Wegner Wildlife Gallery at 329 William Street.

Minutes of the November meeting were read and approved with the following amendment: Florence Ridderhoff and George Solley were absent from the November 4 FAC meeting.

George questioned why LaBravia Jenkins addressed the commission in November rather than the city attorney, to which Julie explained that Kevin had heard LaBravia's presentation earlier and invited her to present the same to us.

**Treasurer's report:** No activity on the account. It remains roughly at about twenty-two thousand dollars including the matching grant funds of ten thousand which will be dispersed early in 2011 to the 5 applican

**Arts & Cultural District report:** Kevin Bartram's report was read by Roy, who indicated that he would send it to the board electronically as well. The report focused upon the Arts and Cultural District to be formed in the city business district.

Comments: Staff will be needed to accomplish the effort, advertising will be needed to attract artists to it after which ideas were brainstormed for supporting the concept. Suggestions were that we will work with the Economic Development and Tourism to spotlight the Arts and tourism in publicity information, and a display at the Visitor Center with all arts would draw and lead visitors to those locations. The Arts Commission will renovate the display so as to give it greater viewing possibilities and status. Also, since approximately \$450,000 is spent on Tourism promotion in the counties and city, can a specific amount be designated for the arts district? George pointed out that only Fredericksburg has the arts district so that idea might not be suitable for all locales.

Julie reminded us that the visitor guide has an arts section and lists all galleries, etc. but that 3 main reasons tourists visit Fredericksburg are to see Civil War attractions, the downtown and George Washington-related attractions. Golf and theater help, but those 3 are the main attractions.

**Public Art report:** Pat Thalman thanked Kerry and George for their efforts at City Council meeting per the public art project. She introduced the two guests, Wegner brothers, and described their ideas and work showing how they would incorporate art and sculpture into the arts areas.

Locations for public art: Need places to display sculpture.

Focus: Should it be themed? Patrick suggests promoting the Rappahannock River tying in the riverfront/dock area and future possibilities. The Wegners are enthusiastic about providing the sculpture for these areas. For the park area Stewart proposed the butterfly, for the waterfront, the heron; and for the dock area, the shad sculpture. Pictures of all three were supplied, and are attached.

The city would install the bases, of course, but landscaping and the pad would be included in the grant request to EDA. Stewart will donate \$100 toward the landscaping. The heron and the butterfly have already been sculpted;

the shad would be commissioned. Also, the higher the pad site the better for viewing purposes, safety, etc. These pieces, permanent for years to come, are symbolic of the area, and of their locations.

Steven commented that the Foundry receives very little to no support from The Free Lance-Star even when it takes part in First Fridays, so commissioning and purchasing their work would certainly give invaluable publicity and prominence to their company.

Julie inquired as to whether Parks and Recreation department has been contacted; Pat will do that. Also, all legal issues must be worked out before the grant can be written, but Pat is familiar with that, and will write the grant. The next grant cycle is early March, according to Julie. Julie will check with Richard to find out whether EDA could work 'out of cycle' and move up the granting. If it is an off-cycle project then it could be done as a purchase with installation later. The cost of the three pieces with granite bases is \$42,500 installed. Florence moved that a grant proposal be written by the Public Arts Committee of the Arts Commission to acquire 3 sculptures by the Wegner brothers. George seconded. Motion passed.

**Website report:** Julie has prepared a proposal to be publicized on Dec 15 with responses due by Jan. 31 at noon. We will vote on these at the Feb meeting, write the grant request during February, and submit it to EDA by March 1. EDA must approve this in order to award the grant. An advertisement for the requests, paid by the Arts Commission, will be placed in the paper.

**Arts & Cultural District ordinance:** This passed at the last Council meeting. Two readings of this are required for passage, and Dec. 14 is the second vote. Julie said that her office will then begin notifying arts places in Fredericksburg to apply for the tax break. Julie said they physically walked the area to determine who will qualify, but they must apply to receive the tax break. It was suggested that information meetings, flyers and a sign up day be provided by the Visitor Center to help the applicants. Julie's office people went door-to-door leaving the appropriate paperwork to qualified businesses.

**New business:** Who serves on the grant request committee: response –Kevin and designee, Julie.

Pat asked whether we would know which grants had been received by the grant request committee to which Julie responded that the EDA would prefer to keep everything confidential until grants are awarded. Roy expressed firmly that the process is principled, fair, and justifiable; he is comfortable with their decisions. Working with the EDA, Karen Hedelt, and Richard Tremblay assist as needed with furnishing details, but the EDA makes the decision.

**Joe Wilson's suggestion for Christmas décor downtown:** It was agreed that his proposal isn't timely since everything is in place for Christmas in downtown areas this year. Save the suggestion for 2011.

**Art Works Conference in Richmond – Jan 25-27.** ARTWORKS sponsored by the Virginia Commission for the Arts with registration found online. All are welcome to attend.

Meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Rochelle Grey